



Kensington & Chelsea NEWS

LWN

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS GROUP

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Thursday, February 19th 2015

New primary school for the royal borough



THE West London Free School charitable trust has been given the green light by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to open a new primary school in September of next year.

Like the trust's other two schools, the Kensington Primary Academy will provide children with a classical liberal education, focusing on a core of academic subjects complemented by art, music, drama and competitive sport.

Thirty six children will be admitted to the nursery and 30 into Reception each year, with the school reaching steady state in 2022. It will be located in the

new development at the corner of Warwick Road and Kensington High Street. In addition to the education facilities, there will be dedicated spaces for community use including a sports hall.

Seeking views

The parents and teachers behind the school have embarked on a consultation and are seeking the views of local parents and any other stakeholders with an interest in education in the area. The consultation is open until 5pm on March 12th.

A questionnaire can be completed at wlfs-kpa.org or in hardcopy using one of the consultation leaflets being distributed across the borough.

Two open events will be held at the site of the trust's existing

primary schools (Cambridge Grove, London W6 0LB) on Monday, March 2nd at 6pm – 7:30pm and Wednesday, March 4th at 9:30am – 11am. There's no need to book – just go along and feel free to take your children.

Toby Young, the CEO of the West London Free School charitable trust, says: "I helped set up the West London Free School because I believe that all children should have access to a classical liberal education, regardless of background or ability."

"That approach has proved very popular with parents from all parts of the community in West London and the Kensington Primary Academy will be our fourth school."

INSIDE YOUR BRIGHT NEW LOCAL



Can Emma and Bryn save The Coliseum?

-see page 16

POLICE CRACKDOWN ON CAR THEFTS

Small garage yours for just 200 grand!

THE soaring fear of car thefts in Kensington and Chelsea has been further revealed this week as a small garage in Kensington has come up for sale for £200,000 – just days after a parking space in Chelsea sold for £160,000.

The garage, tucked between two homes at Gunterstone Road, West Kensington, has only room for one car.

Owners of Range Rovers and Bentleys might not want to apply, as it would be a tight squeeze getting out of the car – as the garage is only 2.69m wide.

A Range Rover V8 is 2.19m wide and a Bentley V8 is 2.22m – which would leave a big-pockets buyer less than half a metre, about 19 inches, to open the car door.

The garage is on the market through estate agents Foxtons, which also recently sold an underground parking space in Elystan Street, Chelsea, for £160,000 on a 72-year lease.

● By LWN reporter
GEOFF BAKER

The parking space came with an annual £75 ground rent and £635 service charge, which would add £51,120 over the length of the lease – totalling £211,120 for the space.

400 vehicles stolen

But paying big money to park is worth the price for some residents – more than 400 vehicles were stolen in Kensington and Chelsea last year. Police warn that high-end, keyless cars are especially targeted by thieves.

In a crackdown this month on car thefts across the capital, the Met arrested 84 people, including 16 on suspicion of motor vehicle theft, during a week of coordinated activity to tackle keyless vehicle theft.

They also seized five Range Rovers and hundreds of vehicle parts, believed to have been stolen and destined for sale abroad.



■ ON THE MARKET: The small garage in Gunterstone Road, West Kensington, for sale for £200,000.

■ TURN TO PAGE 3



Running to honour his granddad

-see page 5



The biggest brand of them all - page 12

THE paper serving the **HEART** of London

Brownfield sites to be used for 26,500 new homes

Consultation open for riverside development

A BLUEPRINT for creating thousands of new homes and jobs along the River Thames has been published by The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson.

The draft London Riverside Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) sets out the planning, regeneration and design guidance that will lead to the creation of 26,500 new homes and up to 16,000 jobs across the boroughs of Barking and Dagenham and Havering, and a small part of Newham.

The Mayor has identified 38 Opportunity Areas across the capital. Opportunity Areas are London's major source of brownfield land with significant capacity for new housing, commercial and other development linked to existing or potential improvements to public transport accessibility. By establishing Opportunity Areas, and working closely with London boroughs and partner agencies, the Mayor will be best able to deliver significant social and economic regeneration.

The London Riverside Opportunity Area stretches from the Royal Docks to Rainham Marshes, a total distance of 12 kilometres.

The document, which is now open for consultation, sets out the Mayor's strategic priorities and long term vision for the area over the next 20 years, how the area should evolve into a sustainable and successful part of the city and how it relates to the wider south-east.

In order to transform the London Riverside into a thriving new part of London, the planning framework discusses the importance of improved transport connections. This includes the potential extension of the Gospel Oak London Overground line, a new railway station at Beam Park; improvements to the A13 and new river crossings.

Sir Edward Lister, Deputy Mayor for Planning



FROM THE
MAYOR'S
OFFICE

said: "The capital is now home to a record number of people and we are working tirelessly to ensure we have the homes, jobs and transport infrastructure to support the city's unprecedented growth. London Riverside can deliver genuinely affordable high quality housing for Londoners in a fantastic Thameside setting."

Much of the land in the London Riverside is already in the Mayor's ownership and the framework also recommends speeding up the development of publicly owned land assets to deliver the jobs and homes the city needs.

To view and comment on the draft London Riverside Opportunity Area Planning Framework visit www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/consultations/london-river...

The consultation will run for six weeks, until Wednesday, March 20th, 2015.

● LONDON is the most popular city in the world among US students who are looking to study overseas, according to new internet search results published by Google.

The in-depth analysis that places London ahead of Paris, Barcelona, Berlin and Singapore

as the favourite place for US students to study also revealed that universities in the 'Golden Triangle' of London, Oxford and Cambridge dominate internet searches.

Google's Education team analysed US internet searches during 2014 focusing on international student destinations and found that:

- London is the most searched for city by US students looking for higher education options outside North America. The most popular cities worldwide are London, followed by Paris, Barcelona, Berlin, Singapore, Amsterdam, Rome, Dublin, Hong Kong and Oxford.

- 15 UK universities, five from Australia, two from Korea and one from China are in the top 30. UK universities make up 8 of the top 10 most searched for universities with Oxford and Cambridge at #1 and #2 respectively. Five London universities are in the top 10. Only Dublin and the Australian National University feature from outside the UK.

- Universities in London' is the most popular term amongst all generic searches made by US students relating to international study.



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020 7641 2000

Business line General Enquiries

020 7641 7000

020 7641 6000

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London
SW1E 6QP

Apprenticeship Scheme

WESTMINSTER City Council is committed to helping young people into employment and is very proud of the apprentices on its Apprenticeship Scheme. It has been a huge success with positive feedback from both apprentices and line managers.

Apprenticeships are an excellent way of gaining qualifications, work based skills and experience with all apprentices provided with relevant workplace placements and training from a recognised OFSTED provider.

The council's current apprenticeship programme is delivered in partnership with the London Apprenticeship Company with opportunities at the council advertised on their website.

Kensington & Chelsea

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accessible.transport@rbkc.gov.uk

Arts & Leisure

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artsandleisure@rbkc.gov.uk

Benefits

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benefits@rbkc.gov.uk

Council Tax

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counciltax@rbkc.gov.uk

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Housing

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Land Charges

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Libraries

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information@rbkc.gov.uk

Parking - general enquiries

020 7361 3004

parking@rbkc.gov.uk

Parking - penalty charges

020 7361 4383

parking@rbkc.gov.uk

Parking - permit (new applications)

020 7361 4381

residentparking@rbkc.gov.uk

Parking - permit (renewals)

020 7361 3019

residentparking@rbkc.gov.uk

Patient Advice & Liaison Service

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Planning

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planning@rbkc.gov.uk

Registrars

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chelsea.registerooffice@rbkc.gov.uk

Streetline

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streetline@rbkc.gov.uk

Social Services

020 7361 3013

socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk

Tell Us Once

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● LABOUR LAUNCH THEIR MANIFESTO

Kensington residents have 'no voice in Westminster'

LABOUR have launched their manifesto for the Kensington constituency, currently represented by Tory heavyweight Sir Malcolm Rifkind, who won the last election with a majority of 8,616, one of the safest seats in the country, by claiming that the residents of the Royal Borough "do not have a voice at Westminster".

Labour's prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Kensington is Dr Rod Abouharb, a senior lecturer in International Relations in the Department of Political Science at University College London.

Dr Abouharb introduced his Manifesto for the general election on May 8th by stating: "Kensington as we know it is under threat. Our residents have no voice in Westminster."

"The values that brought many people from all over the world to this part of London are being eroded by rapacious development and the interests of a few."

"In this election we have a chance to maintain the vibrancy and diversity of our neighbourhoods."

"I vow to promote fairness and equality in Kensington while helping to preserve the mix of cultures that make our borough unique. Kensington residents need proper representation locally and nationally."

Dr Abouharb says he has developed a ten-point plan to ensure that the local, national and international interests of Kensington are heard in Westminster if he is elected.

These are his ten pledges:

1. MAINTAIN DIVERSITY IN KENSINGTON

WE must keep our communities together. Kensington needs housing for residents that is genuinely affordable for a range of income levels. I support rent control and security for private tenants. Not only does it make economic sense for people to be able to live close to where they work, but there is plenty of evidence that communities from diverse backgrounds, with mixed incomes who are integrated have much greater social cohesion and stability. To keep Kensington affordable for a variety of people, I support a London Living Wage for all workers.

2. PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT

I WILL work to create cleaner air and safer streets by greening the Westway. We also need safe cycleways and we must implement the Cycle Superhighway. As your voice in Westminster, I will campaign to end diesel emissions from trains, taxis, vans and lorries and work to improve air quality. For the safety of Kensington's residents, especially children, we must implement a 20mph speed limit on borough roads.

3. SUPPORT ROBUST USE OF PLANNING REGULATIONS

I WILL ensure that development enhances the borough and benefits all its residents. This means campaigning to continue reductions in the scope and size of basement excavations, their noise, and their disruption to neighbours. We should protect our built heritage throughout Kensington. We need truly affordable housing in Kensington; all S106 affordable housing must be built on site. We must encourage neighbourhood forums so local voices can be heard in all areas of planning. We need a transparent and locally accountable system for all planning decisions that responds to the concerns of residents.

4. PROMOTE FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY

AS your MP I vow to make sure the needs of less affluent and vulnerable residents are represented in Westminster. I will campaign for affordable energy bills, lower childcare costs, and to save the Independent Living Fund. When governments need to raise more money we must be willing to ask those

X COUNTDOWN TO THE ELECTION



Dr Rod Abouharb was born in Cardiff to an English mother and a Syrian father. After living in Syria for his first five years, he returned to the UK with his mother and brother. D Abouharb attended Brunel University in London where he studied Politics and Modern History. After graduating, he received scholarships to attend two New York state universities in America, receiving his Masters degree from the University at Buffalo and my PhD from Binghamton University in Political Science.

with the broadest shoulders to contribute more; this is why I support revaluation and re-banding of property for Council Tax. This is a longstanding policy choice of Kensington Labour. I also support the reversal of the Bedroom tax, which is an unfair tax on many of the poorest in society.

5. DEFEND OUR NHS

WE must defend our NHS from the threat of privatisation. Britain has one of the best and most affordable healthcare systems in the world. I pledge to consider ways of making it more efficient while maintaining the quality of care that makes our system great. We must improve local NHS and mental health services, and provide affordable social care. I promise to fight against any attempts at privatisation. I will listen to the suggestions of doctors and nurses, not lawyers and politicians.

6. ECONOMY

MY academic expertise convinces me that we need to think differently from the coalition government about how to grow our economy and generate well-paid, secure employment. Austerity fails to encourage sustainable economic growth. We need to focus on investing in high quality apprenticeships. We must ensure an equality of esteem and good pay for those who want to take up vocational training and careers. These decisions will help people realise their potential

and encourage a diversified economy. We also need to use the power of government to encourage economic growth in times of recession and then make sure government saves money during periods of growth to protect the public in times of economic difficulty. We must also make sure that the backbone of our economy like mass transit is affordable and run in the public interest. This is why I support the nationalisation of the railway system to ensure investment and bring ticket prices down.

7. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL trade agreements can generate jobs and encourage economic growth for partner countries. However, how they are negotiated and the protections that are included in them are critical to whether these agreements are beneficial for working families in the U.K. The ongoing TTIP negotiations between the EU and the US need much greater scrutiny and prior agreement that we will not reduce environmental or labour protections as part of the deal. We need fundamental reform of policies used to encourage development and economic growth throughout the world, including our stance on the policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. It is investment not austerity that guides countries back to growth and productivity.

8. EUROPEAN UNION

THE EU was originally designed to forge economic and social links between European nations. The EU is important for the UK economy; over 50 per cent of our exports are to the EU. Millions of jobs rely upon our membership. Our economy is also much stronger because of the skilled workers that come to the UK. Though we need to ensure that workers in the UK are not undercut and workers from abroad are not exploited by unscrupulous employers, we must remain in the EU to maintain a vibrant economy in the United Kingdom.

9. DEFENCE AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

I DISAGREE with the renewal of Trident. These weapons do not make us any safer, in fact most evidence points to increased likelihood of major nuclear accidents and inadvertent nuclear war. Kensington's diverse population is especially concerned with international issues. An equitable and just solution for Palestine is a linchpin of broader peace in the Middle East. A Palestinian state based on the 1967 ceasefire lines would be an important first step.

10. REPRESENTATION: MY PLEDGE

Kensington residents need a locally based, visible, responsive and representative Member of Parliament. As your MP I promise not to take any paid directorships. Being a responsive Member of Parliament is a full time job. Kensington's residents deserve an MP who will be fully engaged as their representative. I will publicise and hold regular surgeries in the north, centre and south of Kensington. For those residents who have difficulty travelling; I am your representative and I will come to you.

THE LAST ELECTION

At the 2010 election the voting was as follows;

Sir Malcolm Rifkind (Conservative)	17,595
Sam Gurney (Labour)	8,979
Robin Meltzer (Lib Dem)	6,872
Caroline Pearson (UKIP)	754
Melan Ebrahimi-Fardouée	753
Eddie Adams (Alliance for Green Socialism)	197

Failing to comply with planners ends in £800 fine

A COMPANY that converted a property in the heart of Kensington into studio apartments without planning permission to attract tourists pleaded guilty at Hammersmith Magistrates' Court to not responding to a request for information from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Doveplay Limited advertise 16 en-suite rooms at 83 Holland Road, W14 on websites such as Tripadvisor, Booking.com and Laterooms. The rooms come complete with a kitchenette, WiFi, underfloor heating and a daily maid service.

Planning Enforcement Officers from the council discovered that the property is not being used for its intended purpose as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) but instead is being used to attract the more lucrative short-term/holiday letting market. HMOs provide the Royal Borough with a valuable supply of lower-cost housing.

The company was prosecuted under section 171D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and were fined £800 for non-compliance with the Planning Contravention Notice and also ordered to pay £3,214.60 in costs, which has to be paid within 28 days.

A planning enforcement notice was issued in January 2015 giving Doveplay Limited six months to convert the property back into 13 HMO units and two months to stop using the property as temporary sleeping accommodation and revert it back to permanent residential use.

Crackdown on car theft

■ FROM OPAGE ONE

The Met launched Operation Endeavour on February 3rd in response to a rise in theft of motor vehicles. This is believed to be the result of organised criminals increasingly stealing keyless vehicles using a device which bypasses the vehicle's electronics, allowing them to drive them away without the owner's key.

Police across London raised awareness of keyless vehicle theft to drivers, issuing 30,000 flyers featuring advice on how to avoid being a victim of this crime.

Around 800 officers from the Met, Kent, Essex, Hampshire, Surrey and Thames Valley Police services monitored around 20 arterial roads, stopping vehicles believed to have been stolen or linked to other crime. They seized 222 vehicles, two of which were believed stolen during the operation.

Sixteen people in total were arrested for theft of motor vehicle.

A further 68 people were arrested for offences including possession of offensive weapons, burglary, money laundering and driving while disqualified.



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Women's false claim to being a single parent leads to suspended sentence

By LWN Reporter

A WOMAN who made false statements about her single parent status in a claim for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit was sentenced to six months custody, suspended for two years, at Hammersmith Magistrates Court after previously pleading guilty in January, at the same court, to five counts of dishonestly claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

The court heard how when Erika Fletcher Sanchez, of Longridge Road, SW5, first claimed benefit in 2004 she told the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea that she was a single mother. However, the council questioned her relationship status when she had two further children in 2010 and 2011 with different surnames. Fletcher Sanchez made a number of written statements insisting that she still lived alone.

It was later discovered, as part of an investigation by the Council's Corporate Investigation Group, that Fletcher Sanchez had in fact married Mr Fabian Andres Restrepo Bonilla in Colombia in September 2010. Upon their return to the UK, they had lived together at Longridge Road.

This prompted the council to call Fletcher Sanchez in for an interview under caution in March 2014. During her interview Fletcher Sanchez exercised her right to make no comment but she did provide a written statement in which there was no mention of her husband.

False explanations

Sentencing Fletcher Sanchez, the magistrates said that because of her early guilty plea they would not be sending her case to Crown Court, where her sentence could have been greater. They also said that while the fraud was committed over a long period and involved a large sum of money her claim had not been fraudulent from the outset but that Fletcher Sanchez had provided false explanations. However, they had seen her references and the pre-sentence report and noted she was of previous good character.

As a result of her making false statements in support of her Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claim, Fletcher Sanchez received £22,783.32 in Housing Benefit, £2,023.78 in Council Tax Benefit and £978.76 in Council Tax reduction to which she was not entitled. This overpayment stretched from September 2010 (when she got married) to May 2014.

As well as the suspended custodial sentence a contribution to costs of £750 was awarded, along with a victim surcharge of £80 and unpaid work of 200 hours (the latter to be completed within 12 months).



NEWS FROM NICK ...

with Nicholas Paget-Brown,
Leader of the Royal Borough
of Kensington and Chelsea

Not easy to protect cash for the voluntary sector

If you want to understand why the voluntary sector is a priority, look at the Clement James Centre, writes Leader of the Council, Cllr Nick Paget-Brown.

LAST week the Council announced that, for the third year in a row, it will be protecting the amount of money it gives in grants to voluntary sector organisations. And that's despite the dramatic reductions in the Council's own budget which has been cut by some £50 million since 2010.

Frankly it's not been all that easy to protect cash for voluntary organisations again this year. In fact to make it possible, sacrifices have had to be made elsewhere and for that reason I thought I should spend a little time explaining why for us the voluntary sector is a priority.

Scores of local organisations are set to receive a share of some £2.3 million in the next financial year and it is therefore difficult to neatly categorise all the ways that money will get spent; so my literary technique here is to pick one to stand for all the others.

Up at Sirdar Road in North Kensington, not far from our new academy and leisure centre, you will find the ClementJames Centre. Amongst other things, it runs a range of English courses to help people participate fully in UK life and to find a job. It runs an "into university" programme helping young people to acquire the confidence, skills and knowledge to pass their exams and get a place at university or college. It runs programmes that help people into training

and employment. The ClementJames Centre is also a place of refuge and calm where people become friends, find support and advice and can plan their futures.

Professional support

Many hundreds of our residents have passed successfully through its doors. I like to think that the ClementJames Centre, and other local organisations like it, express something about the kind of borough Kensington and Chelsea aspires to be: a place where no matter what their background, residents have opportunity and the personal and professional support to take advantage of it.

Of course the day may come when we can no longer afford to completely protect the voluntary sector: that will be a grim day, but I am glad to say that it won't be in 2015/16 and I'm very hopeful that it won't be in 16/17 either.

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ASK NICK: A conversation with the Council Leader.

Cllr Nick Paget-Brown wants to know what the Council is doing well, what we can improve and hear any of your suggestions for the future.

Come along to the latest Ask Nick event on Thursday, March 5th 2015, 6pm refreshments, starts 6.30pm at the Second Church of Christ, Scientist, Palace Gardens Terrace, W8 4RT
www.rbkc.gov.uk/asknick

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To contact the Leader of the Council, Cllr Nick Paget-Brown, email theleader@rbkc.gov.uk

Shrinking Met in 'meltdown'

POLICE are warning that the Met is on the brink of breakdown as they brace themselves for more cuts which they believe could lose a further 4,500 officers from the beat.

The Met's Police Federation says "the public should be alarmed" by the fall in police numbers and it is now even questioning whether the Force could cope in the event of a Paris-style terrorist attack in the capital.

The warning comes as the number of violent attacks has rocketed – up by 1,500 in Westminster alone in the past year – as the number of officers tumbles.

"Already there has been £600 million saved from Metropolitan Police budgets, with yet more to come as another £800 million is to be saved by 2016," says the Met's Federation.

"Since 2010 the Metropolitan Police service has shrunk by over 2,000 warranted officers."

The Federation, admitting they were accused of "scaremongering", added: "Never has so much been demanded of so few with so little".

Now the Federation is warning of huge losses to come in the ranks of the Met's 31,000 force.

"If 76 per cent of your expenditure is on wages, it doesn't take a genius to work out that the cuts will mean there will be a further decrease in police numbers," said PC Ken Marsh, spokesman for the Met's Police Federation.

"Behind closed doors I have heard the figure of 4,500 who could go after Boris Johnson leaves the Mayor's Office. The public should be alarmed."

The Met's Police Federation has launched an awareness campaign – "Cuts Have Consequences" – to alert the capital that "policing is on its knees".

The Federation said that cuts have "stretched the thin blue line to breaking point".

"The cuts imposed have gone too far, seriously curtailing our ability to provide the best possible service to the communities of London. We now have less resilience, fewer warranted officers and a drastically weakened front line," said the Federation.

● By LWN reporter
GEOFF BAKER

"The police service in London, admired and replicated around the world, is on the precipice of being destroyed."

The loss of officers is especially alarming as it comes at a time when the number of violent incidents in the capital has risen dramatically.

Courage of officers

The number of violent crimes recorded by police in London was 186,767 last year – up 26 per cent on the 148,104 incidents in 2013.

In Westminster, the number of attacks rose by more than 1,500 incidents – up to 8,541 incidents from 7,019 in 2013.

On top of that, the number of attacks on the police is now at the rate of 26 recorded every week.

Last week The Met released figures revealing that the number of attacks on officers is an average of 1,385 a year.

"The courage of all officers is underlined by the number injured on duty over the last three years. A total of 4,157 police officers were injured between 2012-2014 whilst tackling crime across the capital. Between January to November 2014 alone, 41 officers suffered fractures and 18, concussion. A further 126 officers suffered bites," said the Met.

"More cuts will mean more attacks on officers, that is a fact," said PC Marsh.

The Federation is also openly questioning whether continued cuts could affect the Met's ability to deal with a terrorist attack like that seen last month in Paris.

In a statement The Federation asked: "Could the Met cope in the event of a terrorist attack here in the capital? With the terrorist threat increased to severe, meaning an attack is highly likely, and we see terrible attacks across the world, in the USA, Canada and France, remembering that by British traditions the majority of our officers are unarmed?"

"We have seen the firearms capability of the Metro-

politan Police reduced by over 750 officers in the past four years."

The Federation added: "We will no doubt be accused of scaremongering, but the harsh reality is that ill-conceived policies are having serious tangible consequences."

"Playing Russian roulette with the safety and welfare of our communities and the brave officers of the Metropolitan Police is simply not acceptable."

"With more demands and less resources, localism and neighborhood policing is on its knees with work

in more high-profile areas stretching the thin blue line to breaking point."

PC Marsh said officers had been left depressed and downbeat by the cuts causing greater demands on the over-stretched Force.

"They are very, very down," he said, "Pay is down and we can't do anything about it. We have no rights, we serve The Queen, we can't go on strike and we can't argue. We are facing a situation that we've never faced before. The public is not aware of what is going on."

Barnardo's launch urgent appeal to stop sexploitation of children

BARNARDO'S has launched an urgent appeal for funds to respond to a massive surge in child sexual exploitation cases referred to the charity in London.

Last year, Barnardo's worked with 127 sexually exploited children in London, almost double the number it supported in 2010. The charity supports both girls and boys, with some victims as young as 11 years old.

Barnardo's has rapidly expanded the number of its specialist child sexual exploitation services around the UK as more children are referred to the charity for support.

The numbers have leapt alarmingly in the past five years – in 2010 1,190 children were supported by Barnardo's child sexual

exploitation teams, last year the figure was 2,118 children.

Last year Barnardo's began operating in 10 new locations and now provides support in 47 different areas across the UK. The charity offers more help for sexually exploited children than anyone else.

However, following sexual exploitation cases of the magnitude of Rotherham, Barnardo's is facing an unprecedented demand for its services. It is in urgent need of £370,000 in extra funds to help appoint more support workers to deal with the children who desperately need their help.

Barnardo's CEO Javed Khan said: "Barnardo's has been working to tackle the devastating impact of child sexual exploitation

for two decades. The scale of this abuse is shocking - with more and more incidences of child sexual exploitation coming to light.

"Our experts in London see how this abuse inflicts devastating damage to vulnerable children. They work tirelessly to help these children pick up the pieces of their shattered lives."

"Every day, more sexually exploited children are referred to us. Girls and boys from all walks of life can become victims of child sexual exploitation and the numbers are growing. Without further funds we simply won't be able to reach all those who need our help."

"We urgently need people to make a donation so we can give all children who come to our door the support they need."

Running to honour grandfather who was head of Cheshire home

THE grandson of a former Head of Home at Leonard Cheshire Disability's first care home, Le Court in Hampshire, is gearing up to run his first London Marathon.

John Joe Regan's grandfather, also called John Regan, was the head of Le Court from 1977 – 1987 and was subsequently a trustee of the foundation for several years. The home opened in 1948 when Leonard Cheshire, the charity's founder, took a dying war veteran who had nowhere else to go into his home. They became friends and this one act of kindness was the start of the much-loved charity.

The 27-year-old is taking on the 26.2 mile-challenge to get fit and honour his grandad. To ensure he is ready for the big day, John Joe, who lives in Pimlico, trains up to four times a week, with a longer run at weekends.

To motivate him across the finish line in under four hours, John Joe's friends have offered to sponsor him £100 each. They are all keen sportsmen and have tackled marathons, cycling races, ironman challenges and triathlons. John Joe felt it was time to put his best foot forward and take on this first endurance challenge.

He says: "I decided to run the marathon because I felt like I was reaching a critical point in my fitness. I used to be really healthy, but the last few years of work and pubs have taken its toll! I thought running the London Marathon would force me into getting fit again. I am not a running fan so this is a big challenge for me."

"I am raising funds for Leonard Cheshire Disability because of my family connection. I think it's a fantastic cause



■ **DOING IT FOR HIS GRANDAD: John Joe Regan takes a break from his gruelling training programme in preparation for the London Marathon.**

and a good way to remember my grandad who dedicated his time to the charity for many years."

Anyone wishing to sponsor John Joe can do so by visiting: www.justgiving.com/johnjoeregant To find out more about Leonard Cheshire's sporting events visit: www.leonardcheshire.org/events



■ **FLASHBACK TO 1987: Brigadier John Joseph Regan, Head of Home at Le Court, and his wife Nancy, pictured with Group Captain Leonard Cheshire VC (far right), who founded the charity.**

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LONDON WEEKLY NEWS

Can you run a Westminster mile?



■ STEVE Cram who has held the world mile record for 30 years launching the Westminster mile with pupils from St Mary of Angels School



■ THE team from St Saviour's School

British mile record holder for 30 years, Steve Cram launches Westminster event

THE third edition of the Bupa Westminster Mile on Sunday, May 24th will salute one of Britain's greatest middle distance runners.

Thirty years ago, Steve Cram shattered the world mile record in the Dream Mile at Oslo's famous Bislett stadium in July 1985 during an extraordinary 19-day period when he set three new world records. His mile time of 3:46.32 still stands as the British record.

The 2015 Bupa Westminster Mile will commemorate Cram's great mile record, which was unbeaten for more than eight years, as runners of all ages – from elites to families with young children – contest a series of mile races in St James's Park, starting on The Mall and finishing in front of Buckingham Palace.

The 2015 event was launched by Steve Cram at Paddington Recreation Ground on the track where Roger Bannister trained for the first sub-four minute mile as six teams of London schoolchildren attempted to break Cram's mile record in a 100m shuttle relay.

"The mile is the perfect distance for any age and any ability," said Cram. "It's wonderful to see so many young athletes here today, inspired by what I did 30 years ago. I'm looking forward to seeing thousands of runners, young and old, running the mile in May."

"We have set a target of 9,000+ entries for this year to make this the biggest timed mile event in the world," said event director Hugh Brasher.

"In support of the This Girl Can campaign, there will be a number of all-female races for girls and women of all abilities, including the opportunity for mums to run with their daughters, sisters, friends and family."

CLr Steve Summers, Westminster City Council

cabinet member for sports, leisure and open spaces, said: "In the three years since its launch, the Bupa Westminster Mile has grown into a sporting event like none other. It doesn't matter whether you're a seasoned runner or have never set foot on a track – why not give it a try and see where it takes you."

Saj Arshad, marketing, sales and strategy director for Bupa UK said: "The Bupa Westminster Mile has become renowned for encouraging people of all ages to get active, have fun and feel great, whether they're competing or spectating – and that is what makes it a unique event which Bupa is proud to support."

The Bupa Westminster Mile will also act as the official British Athletics One-Mile Road Age Group Championships and sponsorship contracts from Adidas will be awarded to the winners of the Junior Championship races in the U15, U17 and U20 age-group categories.



■ GLORY DAYS: Steve Cram setting the world mile record in Oslo in 1985



■ COMPETITORS from St Augustine's School, above, and All Souls School, below



ENTRIES for the Bupa Westminster Mile are now open. There are races for families, adults, female only (This Girl Can), veterans, juniors, elite athletes and senior and junior wheelchair users. The entry fee is £8 for entrants aged 18 and over (£7 for Westminster residents) and £6.00 for nine to 17-year-olds (£5.00 for Westminster residents). Children under nine are free.

There will be a series of races throughout the day on Sunday 24 May 2015 and runners will be seeded according to predicted finish time, so entrants will be running with people of a similar standard.

CHURCH NEWS



Cathedral Candlemas

CONGREGANTS from the Diocese of Westminster braved a cold winter's Monday morning to attend a special celebration of Candlemas held at the city's catholic cathedral and led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

The Archbishop celebrated the traditional Mass for Religious, marking Candlemas, or the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.

Falling at the midpoint of winter, the festival commemorates the ritual purification of the Virgin Mary 40 days after the birth of Christ, and the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem.

Worshippers in the packed cathedral held candles, symbolising

Jesus as the "light of the world", which were blessed as part of a candlelit procession led by the Cardinal.

Though a Candlemas service celebrated by the Archbishop of Westminster has long been a tradition at the cathedral, this month's celebration took on a special significance as part of the Church's Year of Consecrated Life.

The Year of Consecrated life, which was announced by the Pope in 2013 and began last November, aims to celebrate the service and community of those devoting their lives to religious service, and to encourage others to do the same.

Rugby players raise £1,000 for Stonewall

By Patrick Maguire

MEMBERS of the men's rugby club at University College London travelled to the headquarters of Britain's leading gay rights charity last week - after their annual charity ball raised over £1,000 for the group.

The club's annual boat ball, held on February 3rd, was this year staged as a charity event for the first time. Over 200 people, including current club members and UCL students as well as alumni and guests, attended the black tie function, with the proceeds going to Stonewall UK.

Club president Nick Edmonds and treasurer George Lyons met with Stonewall representatives at the charity's Waterloo offices on Thursday 11th February, where they handed over the £1,107 total from the night and discussed their extensive community work and drive to make university rugby accessible for all.

They also took the opportunity to sign Stonewall's #NoBystanders pledge on behalf of the club, part of an initiative to encourage people to speak out against discriminatory behaviour.

Edmonds, a second year Classics student, said that the charity was a natural fit for the 100-member-strong rugby club - one of the



■ UCL Men's Rugby treasurer George Lyons (left) and president Nick Edmonds (right) with Stonewall staff after signing the charity's #NoBystanders pledge.

most prestigious in the country and one of the largest sports societies at UCL.

"Stonewall was the unanimous choice of the committee. It's a charity that relates to us. We've been working really hard to clean up the image of the club through our multiple charity events and weekly volunteering with local children's sports clubs."

"Though rugby is often prejudicially labelled as discriminatory, we are as open access as possible, and have signed a zero tolerance pledge to combat sexual harassment at university as well as Stonewall's #NoBystanders Pledge."

The club's donation was gladly received by Stonewall, and campaigners from the organisation praised their work.

Campaigns officer Juliet Chard, who

works to combat discrimination in sport, said: "it's great to see university sports teams engaging on homophobia as an issue."

"It's something that we've been working on a lot in football, but we've been looking to broaden out our campaigning and I think universities like UCL are an ideal place for this."

February's boat ball was the club's latest charity initiative in a year that has seen its work in the community go from strength to strength. Members give up their Sunday mornings to volunteer at the Regent's Park Royals, a junior rugby side for children aged four to fourteen, and in November raised over £4,000 - the highest of any university sports team in the UK - for men's health charity Movember.

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● ROTARY IN WESTMINSTER



THE Rotary Club of Westminster West is an active club centrally located in Victoria, London. It meets at The Rubens Hotel, Buckingham Palace Road - literally across the road from the rear of Buckingham Palace.

As a result, the club has the exceptional feature of attracting both national and international visitors to its meetings.

The club has lady members and its Rotarians are delighted to offer warm fellowship to all visiting Rotarians at their meetings, which are held every Wednesday at 12.45pm for the start

of the meeting at 1pm.

Club meetings run for one hour from 1pm to 2pm. The lunch costs £20 per person and consists of a three course meal - one of the best 'value for money' lunches in a Central London boutique hotel.

All visiting Rotarians may bring their spouses and guests to the luncheon meetings. The dress code for visiting Rotarians is smart casual or jacket and long pants. A tie is optional.

Visiting Rotarians may turn up for the meetings without any advance notice to the club.

Writing for the **London Weekly News** every week, London's most outspoken entrepreneur

Charlie Pipes Up!



What's people's problem with a Conservative dinner? Perhaps it's this...

LAST Monday night I went to a fundraising dinner, The Black & White Ball, and the following day everyone seemed to be talking about it, and what really got me was that loads of people seem so outraged. The thing I don't really get is what's the big deal? I've been to a lot of similar events over the years, but never has there been such a furor.

And that's what I told the BBC World Service Radio interviewer who brought up the subject the day after the event. What's the rule? People can raise money for all sorts of things, as long as they don't happen to be business people, and the money's not for the Conservative Party to mount an election campaign?

It makes no sense to me. Everyone in that room that night believes passionately that David Cameron is the man we need to lead the country for the next five years, and that should Labour be elected it would be a national disaster. Everyone I doesn't have to subscribe to that view, but it's a valid one in a free Britain.

Every penny that ends up in the Treasury comes from businesses, one way or another, through tax, so the people there last night are also the funders of the NHS and the Education System, and the Mil-

tary and Police. So why so much anger?

What is wrong with believing that the Conservative way is the best way to return the UK to full employment; to get rid of almost a million jobless young people; to continue to chop out the deficit, and to eventually return the national current account to surplus?

I've been thinking a lot about the reaction to The Black & White Ball and I've got a theory. There have always been people who for one reason or another don't

like big business and their wealthy owners. Traditionally this group would have had an outlet for their contempt, in that they could vote for Labour, or the Lib Dems.

And the reason for the anger I've discussed above might be that Labour is so obviously economically inept and the Lib Dems and dead in the water. So this group of intelligent, left leaning individuals, are actually angry (with themselves) because their brains are telling them the only sensible course of action is to vote for the party

they have always considered the enemy.

Whatever the truth of things the place was in a mess five years ago, and the way I see things, a group of people got together to see if they couldn't avoid going back into that hole, as the result of Ed Miliband managing to slip into Number 10 by the backdoor. And the way I see things that's an outcome that would benefit everyone in this country.

Labour is so obviously economically inept and the Lib Dems and dead in the water. So this group of intelligent, left leaning individuals, are actually angry with themselves

Views expressed are those of the author and no necessarily those of this newspaper



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Landmark anniversaries inspire exhibitors at Chelsea Flower Show

THIS year the RHS Chelsea Flower Show (May 19th - 23rd) will highlight key events, moments and movements in history.

For the first time, garden designer John Everiss will team up with Chorley Council to create 'Chorley Council: The Evaders Garden' an artisan garden commemorating the end of the Second World War, 70 years ago. Stan Everiss, the designer's father, was an RAF evader after being shot down in 1943.

Stan was protected and nursed back to health by an ordinary family who were part of the French resistance; the garden depicts Stan's incredible story.

The garden features a sculpture of a young flyer, seconds after parachuting into France, hiding in the ruins of a war-damaged church, his eyes looking up to a stained-glass window of two young French people reaching out to help him. Alongside this, rests a wall with a poem listing the names of resistance fighters, many of whom lost their lives. A

mass planting of perennials and annuals will surround the sculpture as nature reclaims the abandoned church. After the show, the garden will be permanently located in Astley Park, Chorley, as a war memorial.

Another artisan garden marking a grand event is the 'Runnymede Surrey Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Garden'. Celebrating the Magna Carta's 800th anniversary, RHS Gold medal winners A Touch of France Garden Design, return to the Show this



■ **CHELSEA** Pensioners at the flower show held in the grounds of the Royal Hospital



■ **HER Majesty The Queen** at Chelsea Flower Show

year. In 1215, the Magna Carta was sealed under oath by King John at Runnymede and stands as the first legal document imposed upon an English sovereign by a group of his subjects, paving the way for the advancement of freedom and democracy. The formal layout of the garden is evocative of the medieval period with the garden's symmetry symbolising the new law and order of the time.

Wellington College's 'The Living Legacy Garden' designed by Andrew Wilson and Gavin McWilliam, depicts the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, a victory that changed the face of Europe. The garden also celebrates the on-going legacy of Wellington College, which was created as a national memorial to the Duke of Wellington, having defeated Napoleon. After the Show, the garden will be replanted at the college.

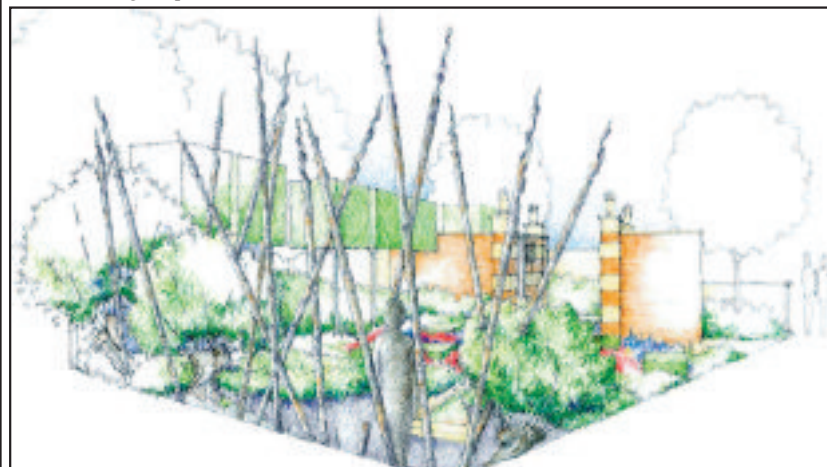
Wilson McWilliam Studio returns to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show after its Show Garden was awarded an RHS Silver-Gilt medal last year.

Also marking a spe-

cial occasion will be Great Pavilion exhibitors, Birmingham City Council. Celebrating 300 years of the city's cathedral, the exhibit reflects the work of the historic building and how Birmingham has grown around it. Situated in the 'Best of British' zone of the Great Pavilion, a floral representation of the cathedral's tower sits among bells cascading flowers upon a wicker angel. Three water features will be used with one sending jets of water from the organ pipes. Aiming to raise the profile of traditional bedding, a spectrum of colours will be used, with a focus on reds and pinks to reflect the painted windows of the iconic building.



■ **ARTIST'S impression** of the garden that will mark the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta



■ **ARTIST'S impression** of The Living Legacy Garden which will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show

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50 Shades keeping capital's firemen busy

FIRE chiefs are concerned the new film *Fifty Shades Of Grey* could lead to more people across the capital being stuck or trapped in objects like handcuffs or rings – already red-faced incidents have cost more than £380,000 for firefighters to release.

In 2013/14, firefighters attended 472 incidents involving people being trapped or stuck, often in everyday household items. This has steadily increased year on year since the *Fifty Shades of Grey* books were published.

The Brigade has started a campaign called *Fifty Shades of Red*, asking people to think carefully before getting themselves into sticky situations.

Since April 2013 the capital's fire crews have been called out to:

● By LWN reporter
GEOFF BAKER

● 14 incidents involving children with their heads stuck in potties or toilet seats

● 28 incidents involving people being trapped in handcuffs

● 293 rings removed including seven instances of men with stuck in rings.

Each incident costs taxpayers at least £295, meaning the incidents over the past three years have cost £388,810.

The Brigade said that in the past its crews have been called to a man who was stuck in a toaster and another trapped in a vacuum cleaner.

Despite the unusual nature of some of the incidents, the Brigade was keen to stress that people should always call 999 in the case of a genuine emergency.

Third Officer Dave Brown, said: "The *Fifty Shades Effect* seems to spike handcuff incidents so we hope film goers will use common sense and avoid leaving themselves red-faced.

On the scene in minutes

"I'd like to remind everyone that 999 is an emergency number and should only be used as such. If there's a genuine emergency, fire crews will of course attend and will be on the scene to help within minutes."

People getting into a jam with rings, bracelets and watches are a common occurrence, while firefighters are also regularly called to assist people and children

with their fingers trapped in electrical items like washing machines, sewing machines and heaters.

The most common type of call out for this type of incident is to people with rings stuck on their fingers.

"Our advice is simple", said a Brigade spokesperson, "If the ring doesn't fit, don't force it on. As well as being painful, you could end up wasting emergency service time if you have to call us out."

Between April 2014 to February 2015 there have been 393 incidents.

The Brigade issued three top tips to help people avoid getting into tricky situations:

● Common sense is needed – if it doesn't look safe, it probably isn't, so don't do it.

● If you use handcuffs, always keep the keys handy

● Fingers and electrical appliances don't mix, especially those with blades

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Chip Week facts (16-22 February 2015)

- Almost 700,000 tonnes of potatoes are made into fresh chips in Great Britain every year - that's 333 times heavier than the London Eye
- Around 15,000 hectares of potatoes are grown each year in Great Britain to be used for fresh chips - the same space as 10,500 football pitches
- Over 328 million portions of fish and chip meals are sold in the UK each year.
- In one year, we eat nearly three billion meals containing chips, with dinnertime being the most popular time to eat them (64%) and tea time the second favourite (24%)
- The average spend in a fish and chip shop is £3.21 - less than half the average price us Brits splash out on a takeaway curry. Chinese food is around 46% more expensive than a meal from the chippy, while a pizza is 47% more expensive.
- Michelin-starred chef Simon Haigh created the world's most expensive fish and chips in February 2014 costing £304 per portion. The costly fish and chips dish includes ingredients such as Dover Sole, black truffle and champagne batter.
- Using the right spuds for chips can make all the difference - to ensure your chips are lovely and fluffy try King Edward or Maris Piper potatoes.
- There are over 27 million visits to fish and chip shops every month.
- The largest serving of chips weighed 448 kg (987 lb 10 oz) and was made by Adventure Island (UK), in Southend on Sea, Essex, UK, on 29 June 2011.
- Celebrity chip fans include Lady Gaga, Victoria Beckham, Rihanna, Kate Moss, David Walliams and Michelle Obama.
- A surveyvii of 1,000 adults shows 'chip shop chips' are the nation's favourite chips with nearly half (45%) of all respondents putting them first, followed by French fries (16%), oven chips (14%), potato wedges (8%) crinkle cut chips (7%) and curly fries (7%).
- The surveyviii also shows that where we live affects our chip choices, with people in the South preferring salt and vinegar on their portion while the Scottish are more likely than people in any other region to choose a portion of curly fries. People in the Midlands have a fondness for curry sauce and cheese with their portion; the Welsh are more likely than other regions to eat their chips straight from the oven; and a quarter of Londoners favour the French fry.

Fish and chips was the only take-away food not to be rationed during the Second World War. Frederick Lord Woolton, Minister of Food at the time, even allowed mobile frying vans to carry fish and chips to evacuees around the country.

FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

London



WEEKLY News

ISSUE 11

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Thursday, February 19th 2015

● AS THE GREEN PARTY AIMS TO ABOLISH THE MONARCHY...

The 'most valuable' of all British brands

LWN

ROYAL
SPECIAL



By Geoff Baker

AMBITIONS by the increasingly-popular Green Party to abolish the British monarchy would leave a £44 billion hole in the economy, financial experts have revealed.

The aim of the Greens to end the monarchy - and evict The Queen from Buckingham Palace to a council house instead, as suggested by the Party's leader Natalie Bennett last month - would also decimate London businesses which rely on their royal connection.

Recent polls reveal that the Green Party can expect up to 11 per cent of the vote in the General Election in May, five per cent behind UKIP and two per cent ahead of the Lib-Dems.

In their manifesto the Green Party reveal their wish to end the monarchy, throw hereditary peers out of the House of Lords and abolish the Lord Mayor of London.

"The Green Party believes that the hereditary principle should have no place in government.



■ **GREEN Party leader Natalie Bennett thinks the royal family should be evicted from Buckingham Palace**

Therefore the Green Party advocates that the monarchy shall cease to be an office of government. The legislative, executive and judicial roles of the monarch shall cease.

It adds: "The House of Lords, as presently constituted, has no legitimate mandate because it is not elected. It should be abolished and

■ **TURN to page 3**

■ **NO ROYAL FAMILY** would mean no pomp and pageantry which, Brand Finance believes, would cost the country £44 billion in lost revenue

Photo: Nieboer/PPE/SIPA/REX

Inside London's new weekly



The Royal Film Performance at the Odeon Leicester Square this week
page 4

Can Emma Thompson recreate her Sweeney Todd triumph?
page 5



Westminster & Pimlico News (established 1857)

◆ Chelsea News (established 1857) ◆ Kensington News (established 1869)

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ROYAL LONDON

Greens' monarchy plans don't add up

Cost of losing the monarchy would hit London hard

FROM page 1

replaced by a second chamber directly elected by proportional representation.

"The Green Party will work for the abolition of the City of London Corporation and the special statuses it enjoys....It will work for the abolition of the Lord Mayor of London."

But the cost of losing the monarchy would hit London hard. An in-depth accountancy study of the commercial value of the monarchy by experts Brand Finance reveals that losing the benefits of the monarchy to the economy would be massive, the equivalent of losing 40 per cent of the entire NHS budget of £113 billion.

The valuation report says the monarchy "is one of the most valuable of all British brands, there seems little doubt that the institution of monarchy adds significant annual earnings and long-term economic value to the UK".

It adds: "When special one-off events are taken into consideration, the benefit for the economy is enormous."

"Novelty mugs and tea towels aside, the public relations benefits generated through the world's intense interest in the Royal family are equally significant ... The value of what is essentially free publicity for the United Kingdom when considered in the long term, is enormous."

the institution of monarchy adds significant annual earnings and long-term economic value to the UK



■ HM The Queen, Prince Philip, Prince Charles and Camilla Duchess of Cornwall at the State Opening of Parliament last year. The Green party would seek to abolish the British monarch, the House of Lords and the role of the Lord Mayor of London
Photo: REX

DARK UNIVERSE

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Narrated by
Neil deGrasse Tyson

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"The halo effect which results from the pageantry and history it represents, is something which is leveraged effectively by numerous brands, as well as the monarchy itself, to provide a boost to both the economy and the brand of the United Kingdom currently valued at £44 billion."

The Green Party's royal policy would also mean Britain's most expensive home coming on

the market, with Buckingham Palace being put up for grabs at a price of £1 billion following a division of assets between The Queen and the State.

"A settlement of property held by the current royal family shall be made, to divide it between that required for the private life of current members of the family and that to be public property," say the Greens.

WHERE TO SEE YOUR FAVOURITE ROYAL

FULL details of future and recent events in the ever-busy diaries of the many members of The Royal Family are available from the official website www.royal.gov.uk

but here's the London schedule for the week ahead for Where To See A Royal.

Tuesday February 17th

● The Queen will attend a reception at St James's Palace to mark the 80th anniversary of Diabetes UK.

● The Duke Of Edinburgh, as Elder Brother and Past Master, together with the Princess Royal, as Master, will attend the Younger Brethren Guest Night at Trinity House, Tower Hill EC3.

● The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall will attend the Royal Film Performance of The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel at the Odeon Leicester Square.

Wednesday February 18th

● The Duke Of Edinburgh, formerly Grand President of the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, will attend a lunch to mark his 41 years as Grand President at the Army & Navy Club, St James's Square.

● The Duke Of Gloucester, as Patron of Habitat for Humanity Great Britain, will attend the Local Solutions to Global Challenges conference at the British Medical Association, Tavistock Square.

Thursday February 19th

● The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will re-open Canada House, Trafalgar Square.

● The Duke Of Kent, as Patron of St Mungo's Broadway, will visit the Cedars Road complex at Cedars Road SW4.

● The Duke of Kent, as President of the Cavalry and Guards Club, will attend a lunch at 127 Piccadilly W1.

Monday February 23rd

● The Queen and Duke Of Edinburgh will give a reception at Buckingham Palace to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta.

Tuesday February 24th

● The Countess of Wessex will attend the Torch Trophy Trust Awards at the Army & Navy Club, Pall Mall W1.

● The Duke of Gloucester, as Grand Prior of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, will hold an investiture at the Priory Church of St John, Clerkenwell EC1, and will open the St John Ambulance National Headquarters, St John's Lane EC1.

● The Duchess of Gloucester, as Honorary Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Basketmakers, will attend a Basketmaking Day at the Royal National Hotel WC1.

ROYAL LONDON

The Royal Film Performance

Choose a movie ... and make it a good one!

By Geoff Baker

IT must have been such a difficult decision to make. Not. When choosing the movie for this year's Royal Film Performance, the organisers were faced with two big British releases both coming out at around the same time – 'The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel' and, err, 'Fifty Shades Of Grey'.

But as nobody in the establishment of the UK film industry has an interest in putting a royal in any shade of red face, it's not surprising that the bondage blockbuster won't be the one rolling the red carpet out for Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall at the Odeon Leicester Square this week.

That may be a bit of a blow for the publicity-ravenous 'Fifty Shades', as the PR benefits of getting a royal along for popcorn and Kia-ora are worth hundreds of thousands of pounds of free advertising, but it was no contest.

For although 'Fifty Shades' may be the new big thing with adults who have just discovered adventurous sex, the Marigold Hotel with its theme of love among the silver-haired sequel is much more a movie of now.



■ **PRINCE Charles and Camilla Duchess of Cornwall will attend the Royal Film Performance this week**

With a clever finger on the exploding Saga demographic, the first Marigold movie took £82 million at the box office – a fine return on the £6 million it cost to make – and the sequel is tipped to do just as well.

Besides, the royal family apparently enjoyed the first Marigold movie – and you'd know it if they didn't, for The Queen's aides have complained before about some of the flicks that royal patronage has made them have to sit through.

Take for instance 'Beau Brummell', the 1954 historical flop which starred Stewart Granger and Elizabeth Taylor and lost over \$3 million. Her Majesty was believed to have so little enjoyed the Royal Film Performance of it that she must have wanted to dash out before her own Na-

tional Anthem. To make matters more tedious than a dull script, in the early days of Royal Film Performances the movie came with the supporting feature of a stage show, making the night drag on.

Declassified documents have revealed that The Queen's aides complained to then Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill, not least as it came in the wake of three other pretty dreadful royal movie premieres, 'Where No Vultures Fly', 'Because You're Mine' and 'Rob Roy The Highland Rogue'.

In a 1954 memo concerning the 'Beau Brummell' screening, Churchill's Private Secretary David Pitblado told Sir Frank Lee, the Permanent Secretary at the Board of Trade: "The Prime Minister asked me to look into this when he returned from his audience with the Queen. The Queen had told him what a bad film it was and he, on his own initiative, wanted to see what could be done about it for the future."

Vulgar and distressing

The Queen was not the only one whose appreciation was somewhat taxed and Sir Frank Lee dropped a memo to film industry bosses, saying: "There is no doubt at all that the quality of the films shown to HM on the last four occasions, which I have also had the misfortune to attend, ranged from the mediocre down to the vulgar and distressing. The whole evening is a long and garish ordeal; it is not surprising that both HM herself and most outside critics should ask whether the selection of the main film to be shown could not be radically improved."

Put somewhat in their place, the moviemens selected Alfred Hitchcock's 'To Catch A Thief' for the following year's royal showcase and it was a hit at the palace.

An Assistant Private Secretary to The Queen told the film chiefs: "Her Majesty had enjoyed the film and was happy with the revised arrangement ... She had particularly welcomed the elimination of the stage show and the fact that, for her, the whole occasion had lasted for no more than 2 hours 40 minutes."

The Royal Film Performance began publicly in 1946 – with David Niven's 'A Matter Of Life And Death' – although the history of movies for the royals goes back much further.

The first Royal Command Film Performance was held at Marlborough House on 21 July 1896 before 40 Royal guests.

The showing followed a request from pioneer cinematographer Birt Acres of New Barnet to be allowed to exhibit publicly a film he had taken the previous month of The Prince and Princess of Wales attending the Cardiff Exhibition. Before giving his permission, The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) asked Acres to bring the film to Marlborough House for inspection.

It was screened in a specially erected marquee together with 20 other short films, including Tom Merry the Lightning Artist drawing Mr Gladstone and Lord Salisbury, the Derby Races of 1895 and 1896, Henley Regatta and scenes showing a boxing kangaroo, a great Northern Railway express train and the pursuit of a pick-pocket.

The following year, in November 1897, H. J. Hitchens presented to Queen Victoria a selection of Diamond Jubilee



■ **DAVID Niven and Kim Hunter in 'A Matter of Life and Death' - the first Royal Film Performance**



■ **MEMBERS of the cast of this year's Royal Film - The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel**

and other films taken for the Lumière Cinematographe. They were accompanied by a full orchestra under the baton of Leopold Wenzel.

The first feature film presented by Royal Command was Cecil Hepworth's production of Coming Through the Rye, starring Alma Taylor, which was shown before Queen Alexandra in the State Dining Room of Marlborough House on August 4th, 1916.

Hepworth was no stranger to Command Performances, having been present at the very first one when he had acted as assistant to Birt Acres. The first feature film to be presented by command

of the Sovereign was Tom Brown's Schooldays, which Lew Warren exhibited for King George V and Queen Mary at Buckingham Palace on February 24th, 1917.

The current run of Royal Film Performances began in 1946 when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth took The Princess Elizabeth and The Princess Margaret to see 'A Matter of Life and Death'.

The Royal Film Performance is held in aid of The Cinema & Television Benevolent Fund. Tickets to the performance are always available to the public.

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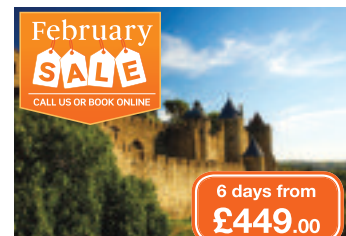
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SHOWBIZ SPECIAL

After a triumph in New York . . .

Can Emma recreate her Sweeney magic in London?

by Geoff Baker

It's a big ask even of a member of the Hogwarts staff, but does Professor Trelawney have the magic to transform the English National Opera?

Harry Potter's Divination teacher has been signed up in the hope of raising fortunes at The Coliseum and confidence is high that in her new role, national treasure Emma Thompson will be just the trick.

With the ENO having to cope with losing £5 million of its Arts Council grant, falling audiences, management resignations and the tall order of 2,300 seats to fill every night, much depends on Emma pulling a triumph out of the bag as the gruesome pie-maker Mrs Lovett in the ENO's new production of Sondheim's Sweeney Todd.

No pressure then on the revered actress who admits that the role is the scariest of her career.

Sweeney Todd opens at The Coliseum next month after an acclaimed run in New York, where Emma starred opposite the renowned bass-baritone Bryn Terfel, singing with The New York Philharmonic at the Lincoln Center.

"I have never been so frightened, ever," said double-Oscar winner Emma.

"What I am hoping for is a slight improvement in London and what I mean by that is having no actual nausea. If I can manage the fear without the nausea I'll be really happy."

"It's a very difficult score, it's fantastically complex."

But Bryn Terfel, who plays the demon barber of Fleet Street, predicts that London will be as won over by her performance as New York was.

"Sweeney Todd is very difficult to perform. When she sang with the orchestra in New York for the first time she actually brought tears to the eyes of the instrumentalists. These are die-hard people who have played all sorts of repertoire but to have Emma in front of them singing with every nuance she could possibly have, they found it mesmerising," he said.

The notorious New York critics, who can make mincemeat even better than Mrs Lovett's cannibal pie fillings, were impressed too – "Can she sing? Can she ever," wrote The New York Times. "Her performance was by virtually all measures a triumphant one, she put a lively personal stamp on the role."

The New York Daily News agreed – "Emma Thompson stole the show" was its verdict. Her return to the West End will mark her first time onstage in London in 25 years, since she played opposite her former husband Kenneth Branagh in "Look Back In Anger".

Since then Emma has created a magnifi-

■ **EMMA Thompson plays pie maker Mrs Lovett with Bryn Terfel as Sweeney Todd in the English National Opera production at the Coliseum in March**



cently-successful film career, including winning an Oscar as best actress in 'Howards End', another as best writer for her adaptation of 'Sense And Sensibility' and Academy Award nominations for her parts in 'Love Actually' and 'Saving Mr Banks'.

Young fans

She also won a huge and young fanbase for the hugely-successful Nanny McPhee films and as Professor Trelawney in three Harry Potter films. Perhaps her Potter fans, now older and open to other culture, will flock to The Coliseum – especially as the massive theatre is including 300 £10 tickets for every night of Sweeney Todd, a big saving on the £125 upper seats.

As the barbaric baker, it will be her first time singing on stage in London since 1989 when

she starred in 'Me And My Girl'. Although the upbeat Cockney musical delighted audiences who went home doing The Lambeth Walk, for Emma the 15-month run became a gloomy time behind the scenes.

"I became clinically depressed, it was the effect of having to be so cheerful every night," she said.

She wasn't really joking. Like many of her profession and many more of us, she has suffered the 'black dog' which poleaxes so many creatives. To help others with depression, she talked about it to psychologist Douglas Eby, who specialises in helping creative people with the condition said to afflict one in four people every year.

"My first bout was during Me And My Girl. I didn't change my clothes or answer the phone, but I went to the theatre every night and

was cheerful and sang the Lambeth Walk. That's what actors do, but it was my first time with actual clinical depression," she said.

"Although I did stay sane, it was tough and I probably should have sought professional help long before I did."

After the break-up of her first marriage depression overwhelmed her again, but she found that adapting Jane Austen for the Oscar-winning screenplay helped her get through it.

"The only thing I could do was write. I used to crawl from the bedroom to the computer and just sit and write and then I was OK, because I was not present. Sense And Sensibility saved me from going under in a very nasty way."

The ENO production of Sweeney Todd opens on March 30th and closes on April 12th, just three days before her 56th birthday. Many actresses and TV presenters have recently lamented that the mid-50s is the age when there are few parts on offer, especially as much of Hollywood appears obsessed with key roles going to younger players who are increasingly encouraged to not only look young but to lose weight for the parts.

It is a trend that Emma Thompson defies and she advises young actresses to defy it too.

Never do that

"You should never let yourself be defined by how you look, never do that," she said.

"If people go on and on about how you look, you have to challenge it."

"It's particularly bad for women at the moment because they appear to be required to be models as well as actors. But if somebody says to you that you have to be thinner, you have to challenge it and ask 'why?' 'Is my character a thin person? Is she thin because of some sort of eating disorder?'"

"You have to say, 'Give me a reason, because if this is some sort of cosmetic reason then what you want for this part is a model and not an actor'. You have to be firm. Do not be put upon and feel that is how you have to be, because it's not true and the more of us who counteract that, the more that it will go."

Her other tip for the thousands attempting to break big in the new culture of instant-made celebrity is to stop dreaming of the red carpet.

"Don't ever desire to be a star because fame is just a by-product of what you do, it is an accident," she said.

"What you do you must do because you love it and you're good at it and people enjoy watching you, but anything else is by the by. Don't do things just because they might pay well, do wild things and challenge yourself."

Emma's new challenge may be a fright for her, but she welcomes the return to the London stage.

"You've got to keep on doing different things and throwing yourself into the dark, otherwise you get a bit samey and people get bored," she said.

There will be little chance for that at The Coliseum, her run in Sweeney Todd will only last for 13 performances. And although that is just under 30,000 bums to put on seats in a fortnight, she has the magic to pull it off.

● **Sweeney Todd – A Musical Thriller. The London Coliseum from March 30th. www.eno.org**

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WINE & DINE

The food and
drink page for
West London



■ **GETTING THEIR HANDS DIRTY:** Raymond Blanc and Kate Humble get on with the business of growing fruit and vegetables at Kew Gardens

A feast of Kew on a plate

THE Royal Botanic Gardens Kew are to feature in a new BBC2 programme starring chef Raymond Blanc and presenter Kate Humble.

The four one-hour episodes are part of the channel's new season of food programming which examines how what we eat shapes who we are.

For the programme the BBC has given special permission for two-Michelin starred chef Raymond Blanc to transform an area of Kew Gardens into a sumptuous fruit and vegetable garden on the site of what was once Queen Victoria's royal kitchen garden.

Each of the four episodes will represent a season of the year.

The series will unlock the fascinating history of Britain's fruit and vegetables. Every species of fruit and every type of vegetable that ends up on our plate has its own story – of exploration, obsessive

collection, invention, scientific ingenuity, exotic fashion, propaganda and changing tastes.

It will also examine the cutting edge science at Kew involving many of these plants and discover what surprising secrets lie beneath their skins.

While Kate uncovers some fascinating historical stories and recipes and discovers how science plays a part in what we eat, Raymond takes the raw ingredients from the Kew vegetable garden and transforms them into a range of dishes that remind us just how special our heritage vegetables are.

As Raymond delights over the first new potato harvest of the season, heralding the arrival of spring, Kate explores the roller-coaster history of this most ubiquitous of vegetable; from exotic 16th century marvel, to unloved food for swine, to our most cherished staple.

We'll learn of the pineapple mania that gripped Britain as people competed to be the first to grow the fruit, sparing no expense in their endeavours; discover how tomatoes were once considered to be highly poisonous; and how a French spy's discovery in South America led to the development of our garden strawberry.

We'll find out how the commercial cultivation of mushrooms began on manure piles in the caverns and mines under Paris, and learn of the obsession that led to the creation of the Gooseberry Clubs of Georgian England.

The series will uncover how the humble turnip helped spark an agricultural revolution, how unscrupulous manufacturers dyed their canned peas a brilliant green using toxic copper sulphate, and how the ingenuity of a twelve-year-old slave allowed the manufacture of the world's favourite flavour of ice cream – vanilla.

Raymond brings with him unparalleled expertise. For decades he has grown numerous varieties of heritage fruit and vegetables and knows exactly which apple is the perfect variety for his Tarte Tatin or which potato makes the perfect accompaniment to a Sunday roast. He will select rare varieties that were once the mainstay of British gardens and, as the months pass and the fruit and vegetables grow, he will harvest and cook them to create delicious, fresh and seasonal dishes, their unique flavours perfectly matched to mouth-watering recipes.

He said: "What a privilege it is to be working on this project with Kew and the BBC. This is particularly close to my heart and I am sure viewers will share my inspiration and passion for British heritage, the garden and the glorious food that I will cook from it."

After the filming, the vegetable garden will be open to the public to come and enjoy a unique opportunity to experience this exciting project first hand.

■ **RAYMOND Blanc is best known for his two-Michelin starred restaurant Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons set in the Oxfordshire countryside.**

He is also behind Brasserie Blanc which has 13 locations nationwide and seven here in London including Chancery Lane, Charlotte Street, Covent Garden, Southbank, St Paul's, Threadneedle Street and the Tower of London.

Raymond has written a new

recipe book called 'Kew on a Plate' to accompany the TV series which will be published on March 5th and is available to pre-order on Amazon.

It includes a wealth of stunning historical illustrations, woodcuts and images as well as beautiful recipe photography.



MARK HIX'S RECIPE OF THE WEEK

WILD GARLIC SPELT RISOTTO

Serves 4-6

THIS tasty, cheap dish makes a great starter or vegetarian main course. The puréed wild garlic comes into play here, giving the risotto a vibrant green colour.

1 large onion, peeled, halved, finely chopped

2tbsp olive or rapeseed oil

160-180g spelt, soaked in cold water for a couple of hours

1.5ltrs vegetable stock, or a couple of good stock cubes dissolved in the same amount of boiling water

A handful of wild garlic leaves and stems, washed and roughly chopped

A couple of tbsp of wild garlic purée

80g unsalted butter, diced

For the wild garlic purée

2-3 handfuls of wild garlic leaves and stems, washed and dried

120-150ml rapeseed oil

First make the purée: simply blend the wild garlic in a liquidiser with the rapeseed oil, until smooth, then it can be stored in a sterilised preserving jar in the fridge for up to six months.

Heat the oil in a heavy-based saucepan and gently cook the onion for 2-3 minutes, without colouring.

Drain the spelt and add it to the onion; season, then gradually add the stock, ensuring each addition has been absorbed before adding the next. Cook for 15-20 minutes, until the spelt is tender but not too soft. Add a couple of tablespoons of the purée, the wild garlic and the butter. The risotto should be a little sloppy; add more stock if you need to and season to taste. Serve immediately.



COMPETITION WINNER

The winner of the competition to win lunch for two at one of Mark Hix's Hixter Restaurants in Bankside or the City is:

Angela Trainor, of Peabody Buildings, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1.
Thank you to all those who entered.

LOOK OUT FOR ANOTHER EATING COMPETITION IN NEXT WEEK'S LWN

Cycling plans 'on the right track'

NINE out of 10 residents in Hammersmith and Fulham have backed a plan to make cycling safer across the borough.

Councillors say they are "on the right track" with their aims to boost participation, after winning the overwhelming support of residents.

The vast majority of people asked about the council's proposals also agreed that its new cycling strategy would encourage others to get on their bikes instead of using other forms of transport.

A public consultation process was launched to gauge residents' responses to the plans, which include proposals to set up special 'quietways' – routes with little or no traffic, designed to encourage beginners.

The council also hopes to introduce two 'cycle superhighways', as well as improvements to Hammersmith Bridge, where a 20mph speed limit is proposed along with a contra-flow cycle lane on Bridge Avenue.

It says the cycling strategy will help to improve transport in the borough by catering effectively for cyclists and pedestrians as well as drivers.

"These are very pleasing results which show we are on the right track with our aims", said Councillor Larry Culhane, chairman of Hammersmith and Fulham Council's community

By Jack Dixon

safety, environment and residents' services policy and accountability committee.

"Whether someone is riding a bike for the first time ever, or the first time that day, we want them to be able to do so without fear – and this feedback will be valuable in ensuring we create a borough where cyclists, motorists and pedestrians can all travel easily and in safety."

Of those who responded to the consultation, 73 per cent were borough residents and 16 per cent were employees or students in the borough.

Almost two-thirds of those who responded were aged from 45 to 65, with young people accounting for less than four per cent of the replies.

Boost cycling

Around 90 per cent of those asked said they supported the council's aims to improve safety for cyclists and other highway users, and a similar number agreed that the plans would also boost cycling in the borough.

The council hopes to increase participation, as part of the Mayor's 'Vision for Cycling in London' programme being rolled out across the capital.

In its strategy document, the council sets out



initial plans to expand the current cycle network and encourage the use of cycling for everyday transport.

Technical studies are already underway at the Hammersmith Gyratory, where an option being

considered to improve safety is to make one leg of the junction cycle and pedestrian only.

Exact details about new cycle routes and infrastructure will be subject to specific design and consultation procedures at a later date.

Noisy neighbour is silenced

A HAMMERSMITH resident who enraged his neighbours with ear-shattering folk music has been fined £400 and evicted from his property.

And council chiefs say they will continue to "come down hard" on noisy neighbours whose "selfish" behaviour torments fellow residents.

Gordon Pavlovic, 49, was found guilty of eight counts of noise nuisance, after appearing at City of London Magistrates' Court recently.

Complaints against Mr Pavlovic, 49, date back more than a decade and he was served a notice in 2013 preventing him from disturbing his neighbours by playing his music at high volume. The

by Jack Dixon

court was told that he had ignored the warnings.

Mr Pavlovic, who has since been evicted from his property in Edith Road, Barons Court, was fined £50 for each charge and ordered to pay costs of almost £7,000.

The case was just one of 6,000 noise complaints dealt with by Hammersmith and Fulham Council each year.

Wesley Harcourt, the council's cabinet member for environment, transport and residents' services, said noisy neighbours will not be tolerated.

"We take complaints of anti-social behaviour very seriously,

especially when it causes prolonged harm to the wellbeing of others", he said.

"Mr Pavlovic ignored the notice and we have taken the appropriate action, and will continue to come down hard on those whose selfish behaviour affects the lives of decent residents."

Council officers visited Mr Pavlovic's home in May and August last year, and with the help of police, removed speakers, a DVD player and a stereo.

At the hearing, Mr Pavlovic, who was not represented, denied the charges but was found guilty of all eight counts.

The case had been adjourned twice due to the defendant's ill health.

New musical director

THE Fulham Camerata has appointed a new music director to lead the choir in its upcoming concert at the Holy Cross Church.

James Day (pictured) will head up the amateur choir for next month's performance, after taking over from long-serving director Christopher Wray.

Mr Day, who is currently completing a post-graduate course in choral conducting at the Royal Academy of Music, also leads the Church Street Community Voices project and is the director of choral music at the Foundling Museum in Camden.

Formed in 2007, the chamber choir's popularity has rocketed in recent months and it now boasts 40 members.

Mr Day has assembled an uplifting programme for his inaugural concert, centred on the key choruses from Vaughan Williams' opera 'The Pilgrim's Progress'.

It also includes the spirituals from Tippett's 'A



Child of Our Time' and Tye's 'Mass for the Western Wind.'

The Fulham Camerata will perform at the Holy Cross Church in Bettridge Road on Saturday March 14th.

Providing vital care for man's best friend

LETTERS



■ **BEST FRIENDS:** John Barrowman enjoys a kiss and a cuddle from rescue pup, Buttons, from Dogs Trust.

■ AS A patron of Dogs Trust, I'm writing to say a big thank you to players of People's Postcode Lottery for the £175,000 award given to help the charity care for more stray, abandoned and unwanted dogs this year.

Dogs Trust looks after over 17,000 dogs of all shapes and sizes every year across its 21 rehoming centres. The average cost of caring for a dog over the course of a year is around £1,275 and this award will

go towards providing vital care. This can include routine neutering and microchipping, vaccinations and other medical bills along with bedding, toys and the mileage costs of transporting dogs for rehoming. As Dogs Trust never puts a healthy dog to sleep, the charity makes additional efforts provide a comfortable, stimulating environment for the dogs to keep them happy in kennels whilst they await new homes.

As a dog owner myself, I know how much love and companionship they can provide. If you're missing some love in your life, and think you could have time to offer a home to a dog, please consider a rescue from Dogs Trust. Your local rehoming centre will be happy to help advise on the best dog for you.

John Barrowman
Proud owner of Captain Jack and Harris... oh, and entertainer

Soho has always been the heart of London

■ I HAVE been reading with interest your stories in recent weeks about the fight to save Soho.

I have lived and worked in Soho for near on 50 years and have seen many changes.

Thankfully, this wonderful area of London is not dominated to such an extent by the sex trade as it was when I was a young man.

Soho has always been the heart of London and long may that continue. I

hope the powers that be will leave it exactly as it is and not ruin it with so-called smart apartment blocks that will take the soul out of the place.

Jimmy Salter (by email)



TALK OF THE TOWN

MUSIC ★ THEATRE ★ PUBS

*The entertainment scene
in West London*

Love it, or hate it, Eurovision is 60!



TOP BILLING: Reigning Eurovision champion Conchita Wurst

JUST when you thought it was safe to go out to a gig, the BBC reveals that it is taking over the Hammersmith Apollo for a fest to celebrate the institution which has successfully scored nil points for musical class for six decades.

The BBC is to commemorate the Eurovision Song Contest's diamond jubilee by hosting Eurovision's Greatest Hits, a live event showcasing some of the "very best songs" from the past 60 years of the competition.

Top billing will go to the reigning Eurovision Song Contest Champion Conchita Wurst who will perform Austria's winning song 'Rise Like a Phoenix'.

Joining Conchita on the night will be Swedish pop Group Herreys, who won the 1984 competition with the song Diggi-Loo Diggi-Ley (loved it) and completing the first three confirmed acts is Natasha St-Pier, who represented France in the 2001 contest and will once again sing Je n'ai que mon âme (unforgettable).

Headline-grabbing too, at the event, will be Loreen, who won the 2012 Eurovision Song Contest with a total of 372 points. Loreen will be performing her song 'Euphoria' which, following the competition, went on to reach No. 1 in the charts across Europe including Austria, Denmark, Germany, Poland and Loreen's home country of Sweden.

The UK's winning entry from 1976, Brotherhood Of Man, also join the line-up, performing their famous song 'Save Your Kisses For Me'.

By Geoff Baker

Following the Eurovision Song Contest, the song became a major hit around the world, selling six million copies and made No.1 in many countries and returned the group to the US Charts.

Also confirmed is Dima Bilan who has represented Russia twice at in the competition. In 2006, Dima performed 'Never Let You Go', finishing second to Lordi, and he won the contest in 2008 in Belgrade with the song 'Believe'. Dima will perform a medley of both songs at the London concert.

Another can't-wait-to-see will be Dana International, who was chosen to represent Israel in the Eurovision Song Contest 1998 in Birmingham who will take to the stage to perform 'Diva' once again. Following the contest, Dana International released the winning song as a single in Europe and it became a hit, reaching number 11 in the UK charts and the top 10 in Sweden, Belgium, Finland, Ireland and the Netherlands.

The full line-up performing on the night will be as follows:

- Austria's Conchita Wurst will sing 'Rise Like a Phoenix'
- Sweden's Herreys, will sing 'Diggi-Loo Diggi-Ley'
- France's Natasha St-Pier will sing 'Je n'ai que mon âme'
- Denmark's Emmelie de Forest will sing 'Only Teardrops'

- Finland's Lordi will sing 'Hard Rock Hallelujah'
- Germany's Nicole will sing 'Ein Bißchen Frieden'
- Ireland's Johnny Logan will sing a medley of 'What's Another Year' and 'Hold Me Now'
- Spain's Rosa López will sing a medley of Spanish songs including 'Europe's Living a Celebration'
- Luxembourg's Anne-Marie David will sing 'Tu Te Reconnaîtras'
- Denmark's The Olsen Brothers will sing 'Fly on the Wings of Love'
- Sweden's Loreen will sing 'Euphoria'
- The UK's Brotherhood Of Man will sing 'Save Your Kisses For Me'
- Russia's Dima Bilan will sing a medley of 'Never Let You Go' and 'Believe'
- Israel's Dana International will sing 'Diva'

God help us. As well as the former contestants singing once more, a number of invited guests will also be in attendance on the night, including "a very special guest performance" that will be announced nearer the time. Will it be Abba?

Eurovision's Greatest Hits will be presented by Graham Norton and Petra Mede and will be broadcast on BBC One and throughout Europe and beyond to new European countries like Australia at Easter.

The concert will take place at the Eventim Apollo Hammersmith on Tuesday 31st March. For further information visit bbc.co.uk/eurovision.

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TALK OF THE TOWN ★ *The entertainment scene in West London*

Wednesday has become Wolfday since BBC2 began screening its highly-acclaimed Henry VIII saga which is giving the channel its biggest ratings for a drama in a decade. As Mark Rylance continues his attention-grIPPING performance as Thomas Cromwell, TV writer Bebe See met the actor tipped to sweep the board at next year's BAFTAs to find out how he gets under our skin.

■ HOW did you prepare for a role of this magnitude?

Well, you read the books. When you have such detailed books behind the script, it makes sense to use them and I read them twice.

I'd check each scene in the script with the book. Sometimes it's a few different scenes in the books that have been put together to make a scene. The book is so much about what Cromwell is thinking, so I really made a study of that.

I tend to try and make lists of everything the characters say about themselves, and about the others. Where the lists are too big and too long, I marked particularly eloquent passages - there's a beautiful passage where Cromwell describes what it is to serve Henry. So, I put those aside, so that I could keep referring to them.

And try and figure out what he wants as a person. I was very struck by him being a runaway. The few runaway kids I know have grown up with a certain pragmatism. The image I have is, runaways knowing how to determine whether the road they're looking at is a dead end alley, or something that has a few openings.

So, you're always trying to keep possibilities ahead. Not to close down your options if you have to make a getaway. I suppose I thought that perhaps unconsciously, maybe, or consciously, with the things that have happened to him that he seeks security.

But, as soon as I say that, it's true, as soon as you say one thing, the opposite is immediately borne. It must be thought that he also enjoys a certain amount of risk. And, I guess you would get addicted to risk if you were a runaway kid, at that time in France and Italy. It would be hard to settle down. And, yet, you would always be seeking some security.

■ YOU are known primarily as a theatre and film actor. What made you want to be part of this television drama?

My wife had read the books and said they were very good. And the scripts that I saw initially were very good. I didn't really know about the depth of the character at that point. But there was a lot of change in it. I like stories where people change, where the characters that I play change. And, this character changes a lot.

So much in the novel is concerned with what Cromwell is thinking but not saying. How do you translate that into a performance on screen?

You just think he's a very private man, and people don't really know what is fact and what is myth about him. I think that's the best you can do, really.

■ WHAT is Cromwell's goal?

He's always playing to win, playing to win what he feels will be the most beneficial outcome of the situation. He chooses to serve the top dog, in a very violent pack, so, he has to be thinking: "What's the best outcome for the King?"

At certain times, I think, probably his best outcome would be not to kill Anne Boleyn, indeed, not to have to do a lot of the things he does. But, like a hired protector, or guard for a mafia man, he knows that if he doesn't do it, someone else will.

■ THIS was a time when hierarchy was all-pervasive. What was it about Cromwell that enabled him to rise?

He was obviously gifted with an incredible memory. And Hilary [Mantel] writes about that - it's a particular form of intelligence. He's also gifted with a canny sense for judging whether people are honest or not, by looking in their eyes. And so he rarely misjudges characters. Sometimes he's surprised by characters, but usually Hilary makes a big point, and says this is one of the few moments he was surprised. He probably would have been a champion chess player in that he's usually seven or eight moves ahead of the other players around him.

Also personal tragedy in his life has a certain deter-

mining effect on his own emotions. It gives him a certain kind of recklessness, or nihilism, about his own fate.

He's not particularly attached to anything, or anyone. He knows everything can be lost at any moment.

And he was just lucky, wasn't he? At the time that the mercantile class was rising in power, and starting to really be the funders of the aristocracy, he knew all about that - he knew about bankers and trade. And also, it's a great piece of luck that he apprentices himself to Wolsey, and learns Wolsey's particular form of laissez faire-type pragmatism.

It's almost like managing a football team of millionaire players; you have to know when to be firm and when to be liberal, which battles to fight and when. All these things, I think he learns from Wolsey. We talk about his mental abilities: he's also physically not frightened. He's a soldier, and he knows how to deal with himself physically.

■ WHAT was his relationship with authority - did he understand how to be mastered, as well as how to be a master?

I think he's able to see authority as a game. It's a game where you can play the rules, and you can call people on the rules. Wolsey teaches him that.

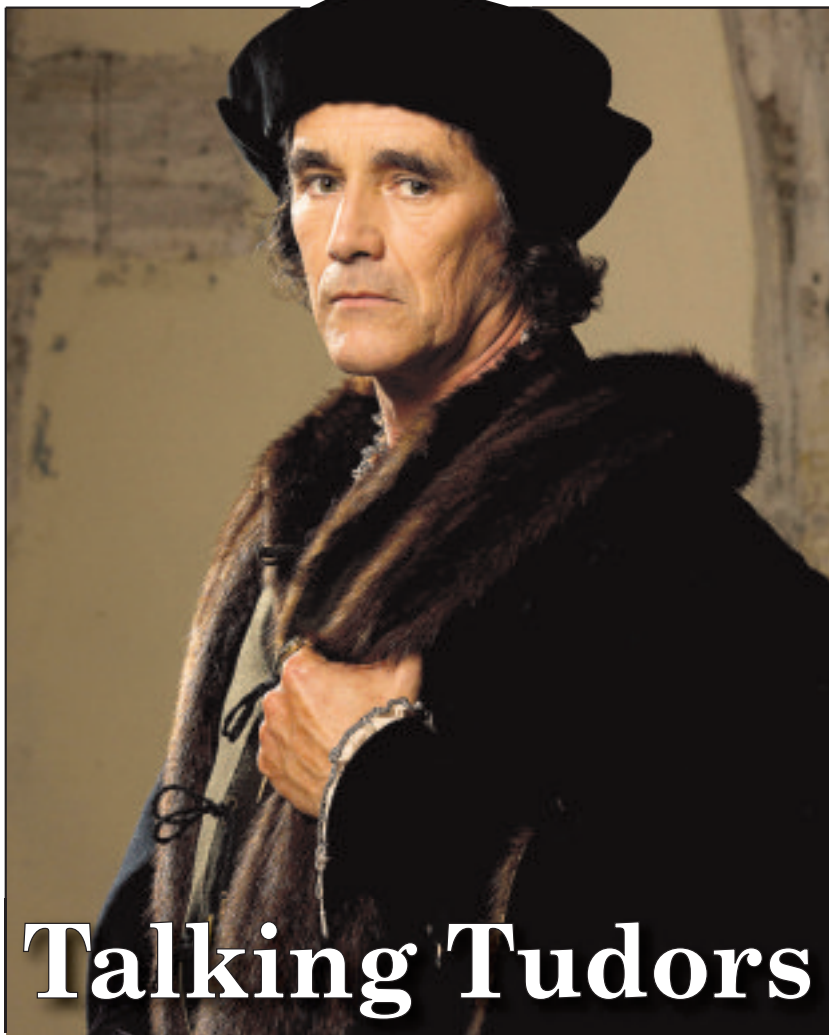
I think he's pretty suspicious of authority. He's a heretic, isn't he? He certainly sees that the present situation has been repressive of intelligent people, like

himself, who would like to read the Bible in English. Peter Kosminsky is always remarking to me that Cromwell divides people into two groups; those who judge him on his own merits, and those who judge him because of his background.

■ DO you ever think of him as a brilliant actor? Someone who plays the role that's required in front of whoever is the audience?

That's a good point. He's different when he goes back to see his father than when he's talking to Norfolk, or when he's talking to Anne Boleyn, or to his children.

I think Hilary has remarked that he's very gentle with



Talking Tudors

women and young children. And he's a very, very tough prosecuting attorney with men.

■ WHAT has it been like spending 85 days filming as one character?

I was very tightly sprung in the first weeks, feeling very anxious indeed, about decisions that were being made, and I felt I didn't know anything.

Gradually, over the period of time I became so familiar with the character, I would often forget we're about to do a take, and then I hear, "Action!" And, we're off.

So, it becomes second nature, in a way, to be on a set filming. That aspect is very helpful.

In terms of the character, it's so confusing you can't keep track of it because we film out of order. So you have to give up on that. You give up on a lot of ideals. And, that's probably good.

■ DID you come out of the process liking Cromwell or loathing him?

I try not to judge characters I play, negatively or positively. They judge themselves. I didn't set out to display anything with the character, I just tried to be the character, and the stories made a certain judgement of what things to include, (or not) about him.

■ WHY do we find this period so endlessly fascinating?

It must be something to do with the very human nature of the King, I think.

He's a very human character, he has a lot of human frailties, a lot of situations that many of us face - of the conflict between our relationship to society, our public role. Whether that society's just our family, our extended family, our workplace, our country. It's the whole idea of divine Kings, or of these rulers who lead us, we're fascinated, aren't we?

When we find out actually what was going on with Kennedy, or Clinton, or eventually find out what was going on in Obama's mind, it's riveting.

We may know more, eventually, about Queen Elizabeth II. Right now she keeps her cards very close to her chest!

Wolf Hall, BBC2 Wednesdays 9pm

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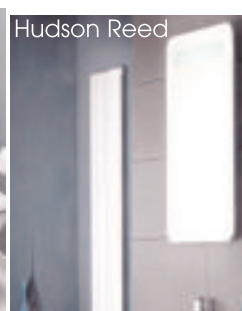
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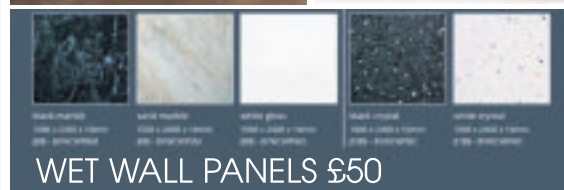
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Sunday 15th March

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**John
xXx**

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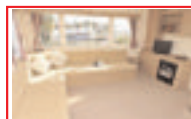
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Closing date **5pm Thursday 26th February 2015.**

Interviews **Wednesday 11th March 2015**



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www.nightingalehammerson.org

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Email your sports news, reports and pictures to Tony McDonald at sport@londonweeklynews.co.uk

LONDON WEEKLY NEWS

sport

Ramsey earns dream chance

CHRIS Ramsey has been given three months to prove to the QPR board that he is the right man to lead the club into a new era.

It was confirmed last Friday that Ramsey has been appointed head coach until at least the end of this season. Ramsey will work alongside Kevin Bond (first team coach) and Kevin Hitchcock (goalkeeping coach). Director of football Les Ferdinand will oversee the trio while also having a presence on the training ground for the remainder of the campaign.

After the odds-on bookies' favourite,

former Tottenham head coach Tim Sherwood, took up the equally difficult task of managing R's relegation rivals Aston Villa, and Real Madrid assistant manager Paul Clement made it clear he wanted to remain in Spain until at least the end of the season, QPR turned to the man who had just guided the team to its first away win of the season at the 13th attempt.

Important night

Last week's 2-0 win at Sunderland may yet go down as the most important night of Ramsey's rookie career in management. Cautiously named only as 'caretaker manager' for two games following Harry Redknapp's resignation, even this confident 52-year-old



**LOFTUS ROAD
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With Tony McDonald

couldn't have envisaged how far the pendulum of fate would swing in his favour.

Of course, many presume that Ramsey is merely keeping the hot-seat warm for a more permanent appointment in the summer. Popular belief is that Paul Clement, the 43-year-old son of former QPR long-serving full-back Dave Clement, is being touted as the their long-term target – but that may be too presumptuous.

Clement, who went on record as saying he was "flattered" by QPR's interest, is No.2 to Carlo Ancelotti at Real Madrid, who are current La Liga leaders and hoping to retain the Champions League.

If Ramsey does pull off a high on miraculous escape from the drop, it would be harsh of the club to dilute his new-found status. And if R's do go down and face another rebuilding job in the Championship next season, when finances will be ever tighter than they are now, Ramsey could be an even more suitable candidate than he is now.

Can you honestly see Clement willingly giving up coaching Ronaldo, Bale and Benzema at the Bernabeu to take on the arduous challenge of turning things around in the second tier at Loftus Road?

In the meantime, Ramsey intends to make the most of whatever

time he has in the managerial spotlight.

He said: "It's a big milestone in my career, an honour, and I'm really pleased with the way I've got on with all the staff here. I'm really thankful to Les for pushing me forward and to the owners for taking his word that I could add something to the club."

"Les is a fully qualified coach and no-one knows better about scoring goals than him, so it's all hands to the pump."

"We know that we've got a fight on our hands. I've been really impressed with the players' actions and there has been some collaboration about what is needed. There is a lot of experience there, so I'd be silly to not listen to what they have to say."

Right man

QPR chairman Tony Fernandes said: "Chris has impressed everyone here in his short time in charge and I firmly believe he is the right man – working closely with Les – to lead us until the end of the season."

"Chris has an opportunity now to stamp his authority and class on the position. He is part of our long-term plans at QPR."

Fernandes added: "A lot has been written and said about the position, including by myself, but the decision has been taken to defer the permanent appointment



New QPR head coach Chris Ramsey is all smiles at being handed his big chance

DAFOE WATCHES MOURINHO PERFORM

■ From back page

Should a journalist have asked a follow-up question? As it turned out, no-one did. Mourinho had won the battle. Had the press corps called his bluff and Mourinho walked, that would have given them an even bigger, better story. But they caved, erring on the side of caution. I suspect that the hacks were more concerned about what their colleagues would say to the one who dared to force the issue and brought the conference to an abrupt halt.

So they let it slide, knowing that their pens would ink a much better story.

As it turned out, the FA also caved in. Perhaps Mourinho's recent protestations of a campaign against his side reaped dividends and had their desired effect. But while they felt Ivanovic's actions did not warrant a disciplinary charge, they did charge both clubs for not controlling their players.

Watching this drama play out with Mourinho shows just how much of a showman he is. It's fair to say that when a film is made of his life, the only man capable of playing Mourinho will be the Portuguese himself.

One man who must have been impressed by

Mourinho's confident performance was the watching Hollywood actor Willem Dafoe. Dafoe was standing behind me in the press room and must have taken a few tips off Mourinho.

Presumably the actor was in town to promote a film, or maybe he is just an avid Chelsea fan and was a football tourist, just like an increasing number that now inhabit seats at Stamford Bridge.

When a sullen-faced Mourinho got up off his chair to end the press conference, his face creased into a genuine smile as he spotted Dafoe. Clapping the American like an old schoolfriend he hadn't seen in ages, Mourinho took him and his entourage back to his office, no doubt swapping notes on his performance along the way.

It transpired that the pair had worked together on an advert for BT Sport – the same channel that currently employs Mourinho as an ambassador, whatever that is. The same channel that is a direct rival to Sky TV, who emblazoned the words 'Costa crimes' across its screens when the striker stood on Liverpool's Emre Can during the infamous Capital One Cup semi-final victory, the incident that so

Blue & White In Brief

■ QPR midfielder

Leroy Fer has sustained a medial collateral ligament injury to his left knee and is likely to be sidelined for up to eight to 10 weeks.

After opening the scoring in R's 2-0 victory at Sunderland, the Dutch international was stretchered off in the 75th minute

■ LEAGUE leaders

Chelsea came from behind to snatch a late winner against Fulham in the under-18s derby clash at rainswept Motspur Park on Friday.

Aaron Redford gave Fulham the lead with his fifth goal in three games on the half-hour mark, before Ali Suljic levelled for Blues with a header five minutes later.

Mukhtar Ali volleyed home from a cross in the 89th minute to grab the league points.

FULHAM: Norman, Sheekleford, Elworthy, Davies, Sessegnon, De La Torre, Paton, Adeniran, Walker, Redford, Humphrys.

CHELSEA: Thompson, Narley, Suljic, Grant, Dasilva, Sammut, Ali, Maddox, Bolkiah, Ugbo, Muheim.

■ QPR Ladies' Capital Women's Cup tie with West Ham United at Uxbridge FC on Sunday was postponed due to a waterlogged pitch.

The semi-final has been hastily rearranged for this Sunday (Feb 22, kick-off 2pm), with the winners due to face either Enfield Town or Charlton Athletic in the final.

enraged Mourinho when Costa received a retrospective three-match ban from the FA.

Coming up this Saturday is a Premier League match at the Bridge against Burnley. Blues opened their league campaign with a 3-1 win at Turf Moor back in August and will be expecting a similar result at the weekend.

Burnley are second from bottom of the league but, while not winning too many games, just four in 25, their consistent, hungry side has secured nine draws. This is the sort of match that scuppered Chelsea's title ambitions last season, when they lost at home to struggling Sunderland.

● RUGBY UNION

Hammersmith & Fulham 2s... 10 Richmond... 34

RICHMOND proved too strong for Hammersmith and Fulham 2s in this south-west London derby, claiming a 24-point victory over the home side.

Hammers held Richmond to a single try lead at half-time, with tough defence and a dominant set-piece. But it would have been a tough ask for Hammers 2s to claim their first league win against the promotion hopefuls and Richmond's backs proved too potent in the second half, running in a series of tries.

Hammers 2s captain Julien Draper said: "Every player put in a massive effort, including the bench, and the score was not a true reflection of the game. However, there were a lot of positives and Hammers 2s will be looking to pick things up this coming Saturday."

The game started at an intense pace and level of physicality, with huge hits from James Darall and Charlie Clarence-Smith setting the tone. But against the run of play Richmond's monster pack scored the first points from a rolling maul.

The home side hit back with some strong running from James Smart and Matt Turner, winning a penalty for fly-half Jack Sargent to slot with ease. An interception try from Calum MacKenzie to a Richmond penalty and another try kept Hammers in touching distance at half-time, at 10-17.

Despite excellent scrummaging from man-of-the-match Mark Blyth (below) and Charlie Barrell, Richmond ran away with the second half. Three tries in quick succession was a disappointing end to the afternoon for Hammers.

Hammers 1s resume action this weekend away at Old Merchant Taylors, while the 2s visit Old Eltham.



MOST punters will never bet against their own team on principle but some Fulham fans admit they've had a few bob on the Whites to be relegated this season – on the logical basis that their possible windfall will pay for their next season ticket!

You can now get 16/1 (17 in decimal odds) on Fulham sinking to League One in May. More optimistic folk around The Cottage might be tempted to back Kit Symons' men to win at Millwall on Saturday at 19/10 (2.9).

What chance QPR winning back-to-back away matches? If you believe in 'London bus syndrome', you might fancy a flutter on R's to take all three points at fellow strugglers Hull on Saturday. Chris Ramsey's Hoops can be backed at 31/10 (4.1), while Charlie Austin is available at

BETTIN' BANTER

6/1 (7) in the First Goalscorer market.

With Chelsea now unbackable in the Premier League title race, the resumption of Champions League action this week presents some interesting possibilities. Blues are fourth favourites to lift the trophy – behind Bayern Munich, Real Madrid and Barca – at 15/2 (8.5) but short-odds backers might prefer to follow the 10/11 (1.91) about Mourinho's men in the English Team To Go Furthest market. Barca should see off Man City, while Arsenal face Monaco in the round of 16.

Tony McDonald

FOOTBALL FIXTURES

Thursday, February 19
CHELSEA U21 v FULHAM U21
(at Aldershot FC), 7.05.
Saturday, February 21
CHELSEA U18 v Reading U18, 11.00.
Tottenham Hotspur U18 v FULHAM U18, 11.00.
Bristol City U18 v QPR U18, 11.00.
CHELSEA v Burnley, 3.00.
Hull City v QPR, 3.00.
Millwall v FULHAM, 3.00.

SPORT

Thursday, February 19th, 2015

● SPORTS DESK: 07711 169 427

Chelsea have the last word

DIEGO Costa returned from his three-match suspension to face Paris St Germain on Tuesday.

Cesc Fabregas was also back in the heart of midfield for the Champions League round of 16 knockout phase (LWN went to press before Tuesday night's first leg encounter in Paris).

Whatever the outcome, with Blues not in action last weekend, Jose Mourinho and his staff had plenty of time to prepare the side, physically and mentally, for the task.

Chelsea may not have the largest squad in football but they certainly have one of the best in terms of quality, and that shock 4-2 FA Cup home defeat by Bradford City last month will be a black mark against Mourinho for the remainder of the season.

The black mark will, of course, be one created by the football board – all they ever demand from 'The Special One' is that they are in contention for the league title, at least until the final couple of games, and

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make more than a decent fist of the cup matches – semi-finals for the domestic ones and at least a quarter-final in the Champions League.

So does a place in the Capital One Cup final – against Spurs on March 1 – make up for that embarrassing FA Cup exit? I suspect that will become clearer as the remaining couple of months unfold.

Certainly Mourinho will have been lauded to the rafters for guiding his charges through the three games prior to the European encounter. A creditable draw with Manchester City was followed by two nervous, but deserved, victories over a tricky Aston Villa and a last-gasp winning goal against a stubborn Everton. These last two sides have always posed problems for the Blues.

Willian's added time winner against Everton gave the boys from SW6 a 1-0 win. But moments before his



Willian (left) scored the vital late winner against Everton Pic: Rob Newell/Digital South

triumphant daisy-cutter, which kept Chelsea seven points ahead of Man City, all hell broke loose when Gareth Barry was sent off for a second bookable offence. In the ensuing melee, Branislav Ivanovic grappled with James McCarthy, putting his arm around his neck and moving his head towards that of his opponent.

Although referee Jonathan Moss missed it, TV cameras picked it up and journalists immediately decided to rewrite their match copy to highlight what they intended to be a back page outcry against Chelsea's loutish behaviour.

Having snubbed the media the previous week, the national press decided to exact revenge on Mourinho. One reporter even went as far as to pose the question: 'Did Ivanovic bite McCarthy?' – a cynical attempt by that paper to link Ivanovic to then Liverpool striker Luis Suarez, who did bite Ivanovic when the two faced each other at Anfield in April 2013.

Of course, these attacks just feed Mourinho's sense of injustice. He knew full well what the post-match questioning would be about – that of Ivanovic's actions.



This week at STAMFORD BRIDGE

But he took his own actions to a new level when, after being asked about Ivanovic, he walked out of a TV interview. He returned a couple of minutes later but only on condition that the interviewer did not ask any further questions about his right-back.

Imbued by a sense of victory, he tried it on again when meeting the press. Asked what he thought about the game, Mourinho decided not to be confrontational from the off but he knew what was coming.

Instead, he said of the result: "I don't remember a team becoming champions without a couple of last-minute goals to win matches."

"In my case, I have had that. This was the first time this season for us against a different Everton. That's a compliment, not a criticism. They were very organised, they blocked low, they gave us the ball, Lukaku attacked the spaces, so I'm very happy with the points."

Restored to the starting line-up, Petr Cech justified his selection by making two great saves, the second a point-blank one from Lukaku.

Mourinho agreed: "He touched the ball twice," he said. "He was a spectator. In the first half he made a good save, in the second there was a super save. This is what we need."

"I played Cech because Thibaut Courtois played consecutive matches and he needs to be very focused. The focus must be permanent. Also, a goalkeeper can be tired – not just physically, but in the nervous system – and Petr was working very hard in training. His condition was magnificent and he was the best option for the team."

"Also, in terms of leadership, as John Terry was ill in the morning and was a doubt for the game until the last moment, I needed Petr's personality to communicate to the team. The decision was good."

But there was no avoiding the issue as far as the assembled hacks were concerned. They knew that just seconds before Willian scored the last-gasp winner, there was that melee of players pushing and shoving as Gareth Barry was shown a second yellow card.

Ivanovic looked to lock heads with James McCarthy. Mourinho was asked for his opinions of the incident.

Here it came, all nicely rehearsed and a challenge to the media.

"I'm tired of stories but never tired of football," he said prosaically.

"The game is about emotion and that is what we had today. Barry should have been sent off in the first half for a second bookable offence when he fouled Hazard. So it's nothing important."

Then the killer question that, according to the Chelsea manager, overstepped the mark. Asked if he felt Ivanovic might be retrospectively punished for his actions, Mourinho responded: "I'm concerned about my reaction, because one more question (about it). I will leave and you will not be happy. One more question about that story and I will go."

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Focus on Craven Cottage

Fans turn on flaky Fulham

FULHAM fans are becoming increasingly intolerant of the team's continuing slide towards a second consecutive relegation scrap.

A year ago, dropping out of the Premier League was "unthinkable" but Whites' 13-year stay in the top flight did come to a costly end.

Last September, Kit Symons was the popular choice to become the club's third manager in less than a year when he was promoted from his role as Under-21 coach.

After taking only one point from eight games under Felix Magath, they needed someone to steady the creaking Cottage and try and lay some new foundations. The likeable, but inexperienced, Symons did that for a while but now some of the shelves he had to make do with are coming precariously loose.

His players were booed off the field at half-time in Saturday's 2-1 home defeat by Ipswich Town. Whether they were booing Symons, the players or owner Shahid Khan for his lack of investment in the recently closed transfer window is not known – probably an element of all three.

Having taking just one point from their last

five games, Whites have dropped to 19th place in the Championship and are now looking anxiously over their shoulder at the five teams below them. One of those scrapping away in the relegation dogfight is Millwall, who will entertain flaky Fulham at their warmly welcoming south-east London abode this Saturday.

With Millwall currently in the third relegation place and just five points behind their London rivals, it's a derby clash that has 'six-pointer' written all over it and, according to the Fulham fan forums, Symons' days could be numbered if the Lions maul their visitors.

It doesn't get any easier after the New Den either. Three of the following four fixtures are against promotion contenders, including leaders Bournemouth and third-placed Derby County.

It's true to say that Fulham are a soft touch these days. Their defence offers more gifts than John Lewis, while their forward line – starved of service from the wings – is feeding off scraps.

It may be harsh of supporters to hammer Symons, who has only been in the job for 20 matches, and some say he would benefit from

the help of an experienced No.2. As always in these situations, it's the manager fans rush to point the finger at instead of the high-earning, under-performing players, or previous management that created the problem.

But it would be nonsense to sack Symons now. Which manager of proven calibre could Fulham entice as his replacement at this late stage of the season and with no sign of investment in the transfer market?

Symons is not oblivious to the reality of the situation, saying: "We've always been closer to the bottom than the top at any stage since I've taken over. But we were rock bottom when I first took over. We need to do better, we know that, and we will do."

"It is all linked in to the next three or four results. Things can happen very quickly. It's one of them – we get a few positive results and we're mid-table but suffer a couple of poor results and you're right in it."

"So that's where it is. There's a few teams in that same situation, so there's quite a few people who will be looking over their shoulders, the same as us."

Tony McDonald